

Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2022

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Rally in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
November 5, 2022

The President. Hello, Philadelphia! Hello, hello, hello!

[*At this point, the President briefly addressed audience members seated in the balcony as follows.*]

Don't jump!

Good to see you all. This crowd's so loud I think you can hear us in Latrobe. They're going to hear us. They're going to hear us on Tuesday.

Folks, I'm Jill Biden's husband—a Philly girl. She's ready for game six, like all of you. It's good to be home. It's good to be with family. And that includes someone we all love, Barack Obama, a great President, historic President, and, I'm proud to say, a dear friend.

Well, folks, 3 days. Three days until one of the most important elections. One of the most important elections in our lifetime. It's going to shape—the outcome is going to shape our country for decades to come. And the power to shape that outcome is in your hands.

Two years ago—[*applause*]*—*2 years ago, you used that power to make Donald Trump not only a former President, but you made him a defeated President. And this year, you have the power to make John Fetterman your next United States Senator and Josh Shapiro your next Governor.

Look, folks, I want to be very clear, and I mean this sincerely, about what's on the ballot this year: Your right to choose is on the ballot. Your right to vote is on the ballot. Social Security and Medicare is on the ballot. There's something else on the ballot: character. Character is on the ballot.

When I think of character, I think of John Fetterman. You know, in its endorsement of him, the Philadelphia Inquirer today said, "John knows what"—he—"his values are."

Well, my—I've been saying it for a long time: I'm a Pennsylvania boy born and raised in Scranton and—[*applause*]*—*but for the longest time, Delaware, like many other small places, did not have a television station. So Philadelphia TV had to cover me the same as they covered all the Pennsylvania Senators. I was known as Pennsylvania's third Senator.

My point is, I know Pennsylvania well. And John Fetterman is Pennsylvania. He is Pennsylvania.

And Oz—and Pennsylvania?

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Look, I've lived—I lived in Pennsylvania longer than Oz has lived in Pennsylvania. And I moved away when I was 10 years old. [*Laughter*]

Look, like a lot of us, John has gotten knocked down, but he gets back up. He's gotten up quickly. John has character, integrity, and he's going to be a hell of a good Senator—United States Senator for Pennsylvania.

And the other thing is—

[Several audience members held signs reading "Free Iran," and the President addressed them as follows.]

Don't worry, we're going to talk about Iran.

Courage. Courage is also on the ballot. When I think of courage, I think of Josh Shapiro. This guy will take on anyone and back down to no one, and we saw that in 2020. He stood up for the Constitution. He stood up for the rule of law. He stood up for the people of this State. And he's going to be one hell of a fantastic Governor. He really is.

But it's not just John and Josh; we've got a great Democratic lineup on the ballot here in this State. You heard from a lot of them today. You heard from a lot of them. We have some—we have one of the best delegations in Congress—"we"—I keep making myself a Pennsylvanian again. [Laughter]

But, really, Democrats up and down the ballot. We need to elect them all. We need it badly.

Pennsylvania, this isn't a referendum this year, it's a choice, a choice between two vastly different visions of America. Vastly different.

Maybe it's in our blood, but John and I believe that all—it's all about fighting for working and middle class people, the way I've said from the beginning of my—my objective when I ran for President was to build an economy from the bottom up and the—bottom up and the middle out. It's a fundamental shift compared to the Oz and the mega MAGA Republican trickle-down economics.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. No, really. This ain't your father's Republican Party. This is a different breed of cat. I really mean it. I really mean it.

Look, they're all about the wealthier getting wealth and the wealthier staying wealthy. The middle class gets stiffed and the poor get poorer under their policy. You saw what happened last time, under my predecessor. The economy was in ruins. He was the first President since Herbert Hoover to lose jobs in the course of his Presidency. Unemployment rate—the unemployment rate was 6.4 percent. He lost manufacturing jobs and hundreds of small businesses here in this State and 100,000 nationwide.

Look, folks, the country was in a pandemic with no plan how to get out. The day I was sworn in, only 2 million people had been vaccinated. Now more than 220 [million]* Americans are fully vaccinated. So we moved. And our approach is working.

Since I came to office, we've created 10 million new good-paying jobs. Ten million. Because of you all. Ten million. The unemployment rate is 3.7 percent, a near-record 50-year low.

John and I understand we need to make things in America the first time in a long time, and we are. That means instead of shipping jobs overseas, we're shipping product overseas. I'm serious. We've created, so far, 700,000 manufacturing jobs just in the last 20 months. Seven hundred thousand.

But for all our progress—and by the way, where the hell is it—heck is it written that we can't be the manufacturing capital of the world again? Because we will be. We will be. And, folks, look—but a lot of families are still struggling. A lot of families are struggling. That's why I signed into law the Inflation Reduction Act that's going to reduce the cost of everyday things in

* White House correction.

families in Pennsylvania. Things you have to pay for every month and you have to have enough in your paycheck to do it.

We gave Medicare the power to negotiate lower prescription drug costs, the same power the Veterans Administration has to cut drug prices in half. We tried to get that done for years when I was in the Senate and Vice President. But Big Pharma spent a lot of money, and folks—and supported a lot of folks. Well, guess what? Not this year. We beat Big Pharma. And the American people won.

We put a cap of \$2,000 a year on prescription drugs for seniors on Medicare no matter what their drug costs were, and some of them pay \$10-, \$12-, \$14,000 a year for a cancer drug. But now, beginning January 1, they will not have to pay more than \$2,000 a year, period. Period.

And we put a cap on insulin to deal with their diabetes. Instead of paying \$400 a month like they're paying now, they're going to pay no more than \$35 a month.

And with John Fetterman in the Senate, with that one more vote I need, we're going to make sure we cap those prices for every single person, every—all that—[*inaudible*]—because they blocked—we had it in the original bill, but it only stayed in for Medicare recipients.

But, everyone, how many of you know somebody who has to take insulin for diabetes? Look around. And it's incredibly costly. No matter what your age, it is badly needed.

And, folks, look, we made the biggest investment to deal with the climate crisis ever. We're lowering energy costs for families. And by the way, Josh and John know that we can cap oil and gas price wells, abandoned mines. We can do that in Western Pennsylvania. We can create thousands of good-paying jobs for the same people who dug those mines in the first place. That's why we're investing \$350 million here in this part of the country to do just that.

We're not just talking it, we're doing it. And we're going to do this while reducing the Federal deficit. You know, because of the help I had from the Senators in the Democratic Congress, we literally cut the Federal debt in half by \$1.4 trillion—[*applause*]—\$1.4 trillion just this year and last year by \$350 billion. And another \$250 billion over the next decade.

Look, I don't want to hear from the MAGA Republicans who blew up the debt. We're the ones bringing it down. They'd shot it up. And by such a massive reduction in debt, we're able to help working and middle class families in America.

Look—and we're finally making sure the biggest corporations begin to pay their fair share, for God's sake. One of the reasons they're so upset with me is, we just passed a minimum 15-percent tax. Look, folks, if you're a schoolteacher, you pay more than that. If you're a cop, you pay more than that 15 percent. But the days are over where corporations are paying zero Federal tax.

And by the way, in 2020, 55 of the largest corporations in America made \$40 billion, and they paid not one single penny in Federal tax. Not one.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Because we reduced the deficit so much, we're in a position to help millions of working and middle class folks caught in the crossfire of the pandemic and the—and what happened with the Russians moving into Ukraine.

Because I acted, we provided \$10,000 in student debt relief and another—another—10,000 bucks if you got a Pell grant. No one under 20—you have to be making less than 125 [125,000]* a year. And 90 percent of that money goes to people earning less than \$75,000 a year.

And look, it's an incredible burden to carry. So now they're going to be able to buy a home, start a business, just get a little bit of breathing room.

And what are MAGA Republicans like Oz and Mastriano is talking about? They're trying to stop me. Their hypocrisy is unbelievable. The same MAGA Republicans who took hundreds of thousands of dollars, and even millions of dollars, in the pandemic relief loans—had their loans forgiven—are trying now to block student loans.

Marjorie Taylor Greene.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. God bless her soul. [Laughter] She and her husband had \$183,000 in PP loans forgiven. Congressman Vern Buchanan of Florida, he got over \$2 million forgiven. Who the hell do they think they are complaining about helping out students? Who do they think? I really mean it.

And what the students are going to—the people getting debt relief are going to be spending the money on growing the economy. For God's sake, Oz and MAGA Republicans don't think we should give working and middle class Americans a break. But here's what they do think instead: They want to make permanent the \$2 trillion tax cut that they passed when Trump was President.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. That tax cut is—not a penny of it is paid for. And it goes to the biggest corporations. And it will explode the deficit by trillions of dollars.

They think—they think—the biggest oil companies that just—the sixth largest oil companies in the middle of this crisis we're in, you know how much money they made in the third and fourth quarter? I mean, the second and third quarter? One hundred billion dollars.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. One hundred billion. No—it's outrageous.

Look, they should have used that money, what they're supposed to do, to lower gas prices at the pump for the American people. If they did, the price at the pump nationally would be 50 cents lower than it is today per gallon.

It gets worse. Do you know what their number-one priority is if they win? They made it—look, they're saying it out loud. They want to get rid of everything we just did. The power we just gave Medicare to negotiate drug prices—gone. The \$2,000 cap on prescription drugs—gone. The \$35 cap on insulin—gone. The tax credit for lower energy costs—gone. Fifteen-percent corporate tax—gone. And the \$800 savings in health care premiums we just got for families in the Affordable Care Act—gone.

In fact, they want to do away with the Affordable Care Act. And that means millions of people with preexisting conditions would lose their insurance completely. No matter how hard they try to get rid of Obamacare, I'm never going to let it happen. And John Fetterman will not let it happen either.

* White House correction.

But, folks, these guys and women never cease to amaze me, man. They never cease to amaze me. Now it gets worse. They're literally coming after Social Security and Medicare.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. No, no, no. Look, I know—I know that the only thing you ever—all you younger people in here—and thank God there's so many of you—I know the thing you know is, from the time you're 16, you have money taken out to pay for Social Security. But guess what? There's somebody out there busting their neck, or you just lost your husband or your wife, you're 66, 68 years old, and they want to take away your Medicare and your health—and your Social Security.

Now, you think I'm exaggerating. First—front page of the New York Times talks about it. I want to show you what—there's a guy out there—you know, they're telling us what they're going to do. They're saying it straight out loud. At least I give them credit for that.

And look, here's what they're going to do—they want to do. There is a guy named Senator Rick Scott of Florida—

[*The President took a brochure from the podium.*]

Audience members. Boo!

The President. —who's in charge of electing the Republicans in the Senate. He's the guy pushing Oz. Okay?

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Well, let me show you.

I read from—they listed in a program—listed all their proposals. This is too small to be able to read. I just circled the one and brought it out here, and I'm going to quote what they say about Social Security. It says: "All Federal legislation sunsets in 5 years. If the law is worth keeping, Congress can pass it again." It means the law literally goes out of existence unless it's affirmatively voted back into existence.

And then along came Ron Johnson of Wisconsin—Senator.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. And by the way, he thinks 5 years is too long. Not a joke. I mean, this almost is so surreal sounding. He thinks Social Security and Medicare should be on the chopping block every single year. If Congress doesn't vote to keep it for the first time, it goes away. Not a joke. It goes away. It's not just Social Security and Medicare, he also wants to put veterans benefits on the line.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Look, they'd put everything at risk. Elect John Fetterman to the Senate, please. He'll protect and strengthen Social Security and Medicare and will guarantee that veterans are always cared for—always, always, always.

I used to get criticized, when I first got elected years ago, when I'd say we have a lot of obligations, but only one truly sacred obligation: to prepare those we send to war and to care for them and their families when they come home. That's a sacred obligation. A sacred obligation.

Well, folks, that's why I pushed and signed a thing called the PACT Act. The PACT Act guarantees health care for servicemembers and veterans exposed to toxic burn pits. [*Inaudible*]—these burn pits are literally the size of a football field and range in depth from 8 to 10 feet. There's everything in them from jet fuel and human—just everything is burned in there.

You know, remember all the thing—all the fight about the cancer and the brain cancer so many firefighters were getting from the 9/11—the toxic exposure? Well, it's the same kind of thing.

I've been in and out of Iraq and Afghanistan over 30 times. I had a son who spent a year in Iraq. He—his hooch was literally—literally—less than 200 yards from one of these burn pits.

Well, this new proposal guarantees health care for the servicemembers and veterans exposed to toxic burn pits. Because here's what it does: Like my son, so many went incredibly fit and came home dizzy and having trouble, and so many had brain cancer. My son came home with stage-4 glioblastoma, and he passed away.

But here's what we did. Up to now, we don't pay any attention to this. We haven't done anything for it. And we had to fight to get it done, and now for thousands and thousands of people coming home. More people coming home from these wars with brain cancer than any other war in American history, and other cancers. But guess what? Now, if they come home and you're still alive, you get full benefits for the health care to try to fight it. And the families and the children are getting monthly stipends for their families and tuition help for the children.

Look, folks, it's not just the—about the economy. Let's talk a little bit about crime and keeping communities safe. I signed the most significant gun safety law in nearly 30 years. I proposed over 100,000 new police officers.

But here's the deal: Public safety is why John got into public service in the first place. Oz won't do a thing about guns. But John Fetterman vetoes—but, with your votes, John Fetterman will be in the Senate and be able to help me add one more thing—what I got done when I was a Senator: ban assault weapons. Ban them! Ban them. Ban them. They have no place in America.

But if Republicans take control of the Congress, they're going to pass another ban. They want to have a national ban on abortion.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. The overturning of *Roe* wasn't the end for them, it was just the beginning. States are already passing bans without exception for rape or incest or the life of the mother. And Senator Lindsey Graham of South Carolina, he's going to make sure that if Oz is elected and other Republicans, they're going to ban choice completely.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Let me tell you something. If they get enough States to do that, they get the Congress to vote for that, I will veto it. It will not happen.

But if we elect John Fetterman to the Senate and keep control of the House, we can restore the right to choose in this country by codifying *Roe v. Wade* and make it the law of the land. And with Josh Shapiro as Governor, there'll be no ban in Pennsylvania.

Look, folks, I spoke a few days ago in Washington, just as I spoke a few weeks ago here in Philadelphia, about democracy being at risk. Democracy is literally on the ballot. This is a defining moment for the Nation. And we all—we all—must speak with one voice regardless of our party. There's no place in America for political violence. No place. No place for what we saw happen to Paul Pelosi, a friend of mine and Nancy's husband. No place for voter intimidation.

You see these guys standing there with rifles, outside of polling places? Come on. Where the hell do you think you are?

Audience member. [Inaudible]

The President. No, I'm—they're—well, I shouldn't get going. [Laughter] But there's no place for this. There's no place for this, period. We have to reaffirm the values that have long defined us. America—in America, the vote is sacred. The vote is to protect and be protected and counted.

And, folks, let me close with this: Here in Philadelphia, a place that defines the soul of America—[applause]—today—today—I've been saying this for now years—today, we face an inflection point, one of those—one of those moments that comes along every several generations. One of those moments that you're going to look back on it years from now and know whether or not we met the moment based on the State of affairs 10, 15 years from now. I want you to know: We're going to meet that moment, just like we've done before.

We are—we're going to enter those final days of this midterm election remembering that the power of America is in your hands. It really is. With—people, just remember, your vote elected Barack Obama President. Your vote elected a son from Scranton President. And your vote elected Kamala Harris the first Black woman Vice President.

And with your vote, you can elect Josh Shapiro as your next Governor, and you can elect John Fetterman as your next United States Senator!

Folks, I've never been more optimistic about America's prospects. And I mean it from the bottom of my heart. I've never been more optimistic. Looking around this crowd, it reinforces what I think: The generation between the ages of 18 and 30 is the most involved—the most involved, the most generous, the least prejudiced, and the most engaged generation in American history.

I look at America reasserting itself around the world and leading the world in the 21st century. I've traveled this country and seen this great nation, because we are good people. I know this. There's no quit in John Fetterman. There's no quit in Pennsylvania. There is no quit in America. We just have to remember who we are. We are the United States of America! I mean it. And there's nothing—nothing, nothing—beyond our capacity if we work together.

So vote! Get out and vote! And may God bless you all, and may God protect our troops. Thank you, thank you, thank you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:17 p.m. in the Liacouras Center at Temple University. In his remarks, he referred to Pennsylvania Democratic senatorial candidate Lt. Gov. John K. Fetterman and Republican senatorial candidate Mehmet Oz; Pennsylvania Democratic gubernatorial candidate State Attorney General Joshua D. Shapiro and Republican gubernatorial candidate State Sen. Douglas V. Mastriano; and Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene and her husband Perry; and Paul F. Pelosi, Sr., husband of Speaker of the House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi, who was assaulted by an intruder in their San Francisco, CA, residence on October 28.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : Democratic National Committee rally in Philadelphia, PA.

Locations: Philadelphia, PA.

Names: Biden, Jill T.; Buchanan, Vernon G.; Fetterman, John K.; Graham, Lindsey O.; Greene, Marjorie Taylor; Greene, Perry; Harris, Kamala D.; Johnson, Ronald H.; Mastriano, Douglas V.; Obama, Barack; Oz, Mehmet; Pelosi, Nancy; Pelosi, Paul F., Sr.; Scott, Richard L.; Shapiro, Joshua D.; Trump, Donald J.

Subjects: Armed Forces, U.S : Servicemembers :: Environmental exposures in war zones; Budget, Federal : Deficit and national debt; Business and industry : Manufacturing industry :: Advanced manufacturing, promotion efforts; California : Attack on Paul F. Pelosi, Sr., husband of Speaker of the House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi in their San Francisco residence; Civil rights : Voting rights; Democratic Party : Democratic National Committee; Diseases : Cancer

research, prevention, and treatment; Diseases : Coronavirus, domestic prevention efforts; Economy, national : Improvement; Economy, national : Inflation; Education : Postsecondary education :: Federal student loans, partial forgiveness; Elections : 2022 congressional elections; Elections : Voter participation; Employment and unemployment : Job creation and growth; Energy : Gasoline, oil, and natural gas costs; Energy : Oil and gas industry :: Orphan oil and gas wells, capping efforts; Environment : Climate change; Health and medical care : Abortion; Health and medical care : Insurance coverage and access to providers; Health and medical care : Medicare and Medicaid; Health and medical care : Prescription drugs, affordability and costs; Iran : International diplomatic efforts; Law enforcement and crime : Gun violence, prevention efforts; Pennsylvania : 2022 gubernatorial election; Pennsylvania : Democratic Party events; Pennsylvania : Lieutenant Governor; Pennsylvania : President's visits; Republican Party : National Republican Senatorial Committee; Russia : Ukraine, airstrikes and invasion; Social Security and retirement : Social Security program; Taxation : Corporate tax rates; Taxation : Tax Code, reform; Ukraine : Russian airstrikes and invasion; Veterans : Health and medical care; White House Office : Vice President.

DCPD Number: DCPD202201006.